

Message from the Chief

Chief's Memo – May 30, 2006

Memorial Day

This week's memo will be short. With the holiday yesterday and my birthday today, I am at home with my family in San Jose.

My family and friends often tell me to take some time to stop and smell the roses. With our fast paced lives and careers in today's society that is not always easy to do. It is hard for me to believe that I am already approaching two years in state service, since being appointed by Governor Schwarzenegger. The time has gone so fast.

My perspective about Memorial Day has changed over the years. As a youngster, I never had to go to school on my birthday because of the Memorial Day holiday. That's what it meant to me for many years.

As a teenager I lost a cousin, Gilbert Serrano, in the Vietnam War. I know very few people from my age group that were not affected by the Vietnam War with nearly 60,000 US military deaths or missing in action. I can still vividly remember when his casket arrived back in the U.S. and my family's response to his death. While we all felt the sorrow that comes with the death of a loved one, there was still this feeling of pride and honor in the belief that he died in the service of his Country. He was 19.

This was not unlike feelings I have had since, with the loss of friends in the fire service or my brother, Bill, in law enforcement. They died for something important. Their deaths were selfless acts and in-service of others.

At age 51, Memorial Day has come to mean so much more to me than just being another holiday. It has truly become a time to remember those who have given the ultimate sacrifice for their Country. It is a time, regardless of personal or political differences, to pay tribute to and to honor the memories of fallen heroes.

Regards,



Ruben Grijalva, Chief
Director / State Fire Marshal (acting)



Aviation Management

During a recent weekend drill, National Guard units conducted joint training with both CDF and the USFS. The guard helicopter assets included CH-47 Chinooks, UH-60 Blackhawks (and Firehawk), UH-1 Hueys, and OH-58 Kiowas. The two-day simulated incident was designed to not only hone water bucket skills, but also reinforce Fire Traffic Area procedures and communications in a busy environment. Pre-season pilot flight training is now complete in all aircraft.

Mobile Equipment

The final 14 Pickups from this year's purchase of light vehicles have been outfitted and released from Davis Equipment Facility to the following units -- Siskiyou; Amador/El Dorado; Sonoma/Lake Napa; Shasta/Trinity; Redding; Humboldt/Del Norte; Santa Clara; San Bernardino and Mendocino.

Also 14 ECT cab & chassis have been ordered from International. These are in addition to the nine chassis that are currently at Davis awaiting the results of the bid opening for construction for the next family of ECTs. Davis Equipment Facility was able to purchase the units utilizing this year's State vehicle contract, which in turn provided significant monetary savings to the department and will ensure that all units will be from the same OEM manufacturer.

DGS Procurement held the bid opening on May 18 for the lone transport that we have on order and the successful bidder was Sterling. This purchase is to replace the loss of a transport that was involved in a vehicle accident. The funding for this purchase is the result of an insurance reimbursement to our department.